

a Consultant for the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the new American Schools Development Corporation (MASDC) and the American Association of School Administrators (AASA). He has also served on several prestigious national task forces and panels such as the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Science and Mathematics, the Florida Speaker's Task Force on Mathematics, Science and Computer Education, and the National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics.

Many of his colleagues admire him for his leadership in ensuring equality of opportunity in our schools. At the same time, his forceful advocacy in adhering to the tenets of equal treatment under the law for all has been unequivocal not only in the halls of academia, but also in every government agency geared toward the responsible and productive well-being of our children. In fact, countless others have been touched by his untiring commitment to this agenda.

Dr. Agrawal is the consummate educational activist who abides by the dictum that those children who have less in life through no fault of their own should be helped at all costs in their quest for mastery of the basic skills and academic achievement. He has not faltered one iota in his belief that all children can learn and can succeed, given the appropriate affective and cognitive assistance from their parents and teachers. The numerous accolades with which he has been honored by various state and national organizations succinctly represent a genuine testimony of the utmost respect he enjoys from the academic community.

Blessed by a down-to-earth common sense, he is also imbued with the uncommon wisdom of subtly recognizing the strengths and limitations of those who have been empowered to govern over the well-being of others. It is this quality that endears him to many of his colleagues. And it is this superlative rapport that buttresses his leadership over several civic and social organizations, which have so wisely depended upon his vision and commitment.

Presently, he serves as Vice-President of the National Advisory Council for South Asian Affairs, a public interest foreign policy group recognized by the U.S. State Department. In 1994 he was appointed by the then Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown to the U.S. 2000 Census Advisory Committee on the Asian and Pacific Islander Populations for a three-year term. In 1997, he was reappointed to another three-year term by current Secretary of Commerce William M. Daley.

He thoroughly understands the accoutrements of power and leadership. And he is wont to exercise this knowledge alongside the mandate of his convictions and the wisdom of his conscience, sagely focusing their elements upon the good of the community he has learned to love and care for so deeply. His word is his bond to those he deals with—not only in his moments of triumphal exuberance, but also in his quest to help transform our communities into the veritable mosaic of vibrant cultures and diverse people converging into the great promise and optimism that is America.

Dr. Piyush Agrawal truly exemplifies this unique leadership whose courageous vision and firm belief appeal to our noble character

as a nation. At the risk of being presumptuous, I want to extend to him the gratitude of our community. I sincerely bid him good luck on his well-deserved retirement and wish him Godspeed in all his endeavors. He will certainly be missed.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 30, 1999*

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, on September 30, 1999, I was unavoidably detained during three rollcall votes: number 460, H. Res. 312 on Agreeing to the Resolution Providing for Consideration of H.R. 2910, National Transportation Safety Board Authorization; number 461 on Approving the Journal; and number 462 on Passage of H.R. 2910, the National Transportation Safety Board Authorization. Had I been present for the votes, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall votes 460, 461, and 462.

#### TRIBUTE TO OHIO CITIZENS AGAINST LAWSUIT ABUSE

#### HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 30, 1999*

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, the week of September 19–25, 1999 was recently observed in my home State of Ohio as Ohio Lawsuit Awareness Week (LAAW). As the House prepares to vote on the critical issue of managed care reform, there is perhaps no more appropriate time to focus attention on the importance of preventing lawsuit abuse and reversing our Nation's transformation into an overly litigious society.

Ohio Citizens Against Lawsuit Abuse (OCALA) has been a leader in this regard in recent years. We owe a debt of gratitude to the more than 5,000 consumers, physicians, taxpayers, small business operators and other professionals associated with OCALA who have dedicated their time and resources to increasing public awareness of lawsuit abuse and the need to improve America's civil justice system. We owe particular thanks to Dr. David Rummel, DDS; Peter Beck; Ken Blair, Jr.; Gerald Miller; and Claire Wolfe, MD, all of whom are members of OCALA's Board of Directors.

In recent years Congress has made great strides in the effort to reform our Nation's justice system and ensure that it is structured to protect the rights of citizens, rather than simply the prosperity of the trial bar. Whether the issue has been securities litigation, medical malpractice, or the "Y2K" problem, we have been steadfast in our support for bipartisan reforms that seek to restore fairness to the legal system and limit frivolous litigation. Next week, as the House faces the highly politicized challenge of protecting patients and expanding access in our Nation's healthcare delivery system, we must strive to be consistent in that posture.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer my congratulations to all of the individuals associated

with OCALA, and to express my strong support for the cause for which OCALA exists. Through the courage and dedication of organizations like OCALA across the United States and the courageous support of legislators who support its vision, we will continue to move toward an American civil justice system that will truly meet the need of its citizens in the 21st century.

#### TRIBUTE TO VALLEY COLLEGE

#### HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

#### HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 30, 1999*

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, Representative HENRY A. WAXMAN, and I, rise to pay tribute to Los Angeles Valley College, which this year is celebrating its 50th anniversary. Over the past five decades, Valley College has exemplified the best in American public education. Despite charging nominal fees to its students, the college has a top-notch faculty, the largest library in the San Fernando Valley and today offers more than 50 academic majors. Forty percent of the students who attend Valley College view it as a pathway to facilitate transfers into four-year colleges and universities.

When Valley College opened its doors in 1949, the San Fernando Valley was a suburban/rural community. The changes in the college since that time have paralleled the changes in the Valley, which is much more diverse than it was at the end of the Second World War. The College had done an outstanding job of adapting its curriculum and facilities to new and different circumstances.

Valley College has also kept up with the rapid pace of technological change at the end of the 20th century. The library recently completed its automation project and is now online with access to four separate databases. The College currently maintains a Bio-Tutorial Lab, Computer Science Lab, Music Listening Lab, Speech Lab, Foreign Language Lab, Statistics Lab and several open labs with Internet access for all students.

Valley College has developed a program that provides a number of one- and two-year technical programs such as accounting, business administration and computer sciences. Through the years, thousands of students have used these programs to enter rewarding careers.

Valley College has also made a concerted effort to meet the educational needs of high school students in the San Fernando Valley. The Afternoon College enables these young people to improve their basic skills before they graduate, which helps ensure that they will succeed in college. The Early-Start Program allows college-bound high school students to earn college credit while still attending high school.

We ask our colleagues to join us in saluting Dr. Tyree Wieder, President of Valley College, and the entire faculty and staff on this special occasion. Thanks to these dedicated educators, Valley College is a superb example of the best that California's Community College System has to offer. With the continued hard work of such committed individuals, the next